



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **TN DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH NAMES JOHNSON MENTAL HEALTH CENTER AS CRISIS PROVIDER TO HAMILTON COUNTY**

**NASHVILLE** – The Tennessee Department of Mental Health (TDMH) is pleased to announce that Volunteer Behavioral Health Systems, which is represented in Chattanooga by the Johnson Mental Health Center, will be the new provider of crisis services for Hamilton County effective July 1, 2011. This announcement comes as part of an ongoing top-to-bottom review that Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam asked each state agency undertake to identify ways in which the departments can provide services more efficiently and effectively to the citizens of Tennessee.

During this review process Hamilton County was identified as the only county in the state being served by two different crisis service providers, which has often led to confusion for individuals seeking services. TDMH is committed to creating systems that provide a continuum of services for individuals in crisis to ensure care and treatment can be provided in an environment more conducive to meeting the specific needs of those individuals.

To enhance the efficiency of this service, interested parties were invited to submit applications to be the single crisis provider for Hamilton County. As a result of this process, TDMH named the Johnson Mental Health Center as the single provider for the greater Chattanooga community. "Our department is dedicated to improving access to crisis services for the people of Tennessee," stated Doug Varney, Commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health. "We believe that the Johnson Mental Health Center is up to the task of meeting the specific care and treatment needs of the residents of Hamilton County."

TDMH is grateful for the many years of dedicated and committed service that Fortwood Center has offered the citizens of Hamilton County in the provision of crisis services. Fortwood Center and the Johnson Mental Health Center will be joining forces to ensure members of the local community are aware of these changes and making certain that the transition for individuals seeking services is as smooth as possible.

For all future crisis related needs in Hamilton County, please call 1-800-704-2651 or 1-855-CRISIS-1 (274-7471) for crisis needs statewide.

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